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ABSTRACT

This book is an account of a study of racism among young people in the central and southern parts of the London (England) Borough of Greenwich. It builds upon an earlier study in the Thamemead area in seeking to understand the social basis of racist activity in order to design strategies to combat it. Greenwich is an area that has experienced considerable racial tension, including the highly publicized murder of a young black man. The ethnic minority population of the borough is about 13%, representing various ethnic groups. Observations and interviews with young people in Greenwich identified high levels of racism among adolescents aged 14 to 17 in areas where there were relatively few minority families. Many of the young people proclaimed their racism openly, although the seriousness of racial assaults and harassment was widely denied among both adolescent and adult populations. Racist activities were mainly carried out by groups. There was little evidence that racist attitudes were merely the reproducing of parental attitudes. Instead, they appeared to reflect a youth culture strengthened, but not caused, by national racist groups. Efforts to combat racism should focus on young people and the awareness that their racism is the manifestation of a youth culture. Some specific suggestions are made for addressing youth racism. (SLD)

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